



# OUR LADY OF REPARATION RC CHURCH

(ST MARY'S)

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Fr Patrick Feyisetan (Parish Priest)

Fr Celestine Ekwueme (Assistant Priest)

Fr Peter Sebastian (Assistant Priest)

Revd. Vincent Morrison (Deacon)

**SUNDAY MASS TIMES:** 7:00pm (Saturday); 8am, 9:15am; 10:45am; 12:15pm, 3:00pm & 6:00pm

**WEEKDAY MASS TIMES:** 10am; 12:10pm (**ONLINE ONLY**) & 6.45pm Saturday: 10am

**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:** Weekday 12:45pm – 6:00pm; Sat. 10:45am – 6:00pm  
(ONLY ACCESSIBLE ONLINE)

## EASTER VIGIL

## 3RD APRIL 2021

### Preparation of the Candle:

*The Priest briefly instructs the people about the night vigil in these or similar words:*

Dear brethren (brothers and sisters),  
on this most sacred night,  
in which our Lord Jesus Christ  
passed over from death to life,  
the Church calls upon her sons and daughters,  
scattered throughout the world,  
to come together to watch and pray.

If we keep the memorial  
of the Lord's paschal solemnity in this way,  
listening to his word and celebrating his mysteries,  
then we shall have the sure hope  
of sharing his triumph over death  
and living with him in God.

*The Priest then cuts a cross into the candle with a stylus. Then he makes the Greek letter Alpha above the cross, the letter Omega below, and the four numerals of the current year between the arms of the cross, saying meanwhile:*

1. Christ yesterday and today; (*he cuts a vertical line*)
2. the Beginning and the End; (*he cuts a horizontal line*)
3. the Alpha; (*he cuts the letter Alpha above the vertical line*)
4. and the Omega. (*he cuts the letter Omega below the vertical line*)
5. All time belongs to him; (*he cuts the first numeral of the current year in the upper left corner of the cross*)
6. and all the ages. (*he cuts the second numeral of the current year in the upper right corner of the cross*)
7. To him be glory and power (*he cuts the third numeral of*

*the current year in the lower left corner of the cross)*

8. through every age and for ever. Amen. (*he cuts the fourth numeral of the current year in the lower right corner of the cross*)

*When the cutting of the cross and of the other signs has been completed, the Priest may insert five grains of incense into the candle in the form of a cross, meanwhile saying:*

1. By his holy
2. and glorious wounds,
3. may Christ the Lord
4. guard us
5. and protect us. Amen.

May the light of Christ rising in glory  
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

### Procession

*When the candle has been lit, the Minister standing and raising up the candle, says:*

The Light of Christ.

*And all reply:*

**Thanks be to God.**

### Easter Proclamation

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,  
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,  
let the trumpet of salvation  
sound aloud our mighty King's triumph!  
Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,  
ablaze with light from her eternal King,  
let all corners of the earth be glad,  
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.

Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,  
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,  
let this holy building shake with joy,  
filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.

[ Therefore, dearest friends,  
standing in the awesome glory of this holy light,  
invoke with me, I ask you,  
the mercy of God almighty,  
that he, who has been pleased to number me,  
though unworthy, among the Levites,  
may pour into me his light unshadowed,  
that I may sing this candle's perfect praises. ]

[ The Lord be with you. ]

[ **And with your spirit.** ]

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right and just.**

It is truly right and just,  
with ardent love of mind and heart  
and with devoted service of our voice,  
to acclaim our God invisible, the almighty Father,  
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the eternal Father,  
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,  
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover,  
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,  
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,  
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,  
from slavery in Egypt  
and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night  
that with a pillar of fire  
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night  
that even now, throughout the world,  
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices  
and from the gloom of sin,  
leading them to grace  
and joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night,  
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death  
and rose victorious from the underworld.

Our birth would have been no gain,  
had we not been redeemed.

O wonder of your humble care for us!  
O love, O charity beyond all telling,  
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!  
O truly necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault  
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!  
O truly blessed night,  
worthy alone to know the time and hour  
when Christ rose from the underworld!  
This is the night  
of which it is written:  
The night shall be as bright as day,  
dazzling is the night for me,  
and full of gladness.  
The sanctifying power of this night  
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,  
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners,  
drives out hatred, fosters concord, and brings down the  
mighty.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,  
accept this candle, a solemn offering,  
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,  
an evening sacrifice of praise,  
this gift from your most holy Church.  
But now we know the praises of this pillar,  
which glowing fire ignites for God's honour,  
a fire into many flames divided,  
yet never dimmed by sharing of its light,  
for it is fed by melting wax,  
drawn out by mother bees  
to build a torch so precious.  
O truly blessed night,  
when things of heaven are wed to those of earth,  
and divine to the human.

Therefore, O Lord,  
we pray you that this candle,  
hallowed to the honour of your name,  
may persevere undimmed,  
to overcome the darkness of this night.  
Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,  
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.

May this flame be found still burning  
by the Morning Star:  
the one Morning Star who never sets,  
Christ your Son,  
who, coming back from death's domain,  
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

#### **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Dear brethren (brothers and sisters),  
now that we have begun our solemn Vigil,  
let us listen with quiet hearts to the Word of God.  
Let us meditate on how God in times past saved his  
people and in these, the last days,

has sent us his Son as our Redeemer.  
Let us pray that our God  
may complete this paschal work of salvation  
by the fullness of redemption.

**First reading**                      **Genesis 1:1-2:2**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night.' Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven.' Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw

that it was good.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**Psalms 103(104):1-2,5-6,10,12-14,24,35**

**R.      Send forth your spirit, O Lord, and renew  
          the face of the earth.**

Bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are,  
clothed in majesty and glory,  
wrapped in light as in a robe! **R.**

You founded the earth on its base,  
to stand firm from age to age.  
You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak:  
the waters stood higher than the mountains. **R.**

You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
they flow in between the hills.  
On their banks dwell the birds of heaven;  
from the branches they sing their song. **R.**

From your dwelling you water the hills;  
earth drinks its fill of your gift.  
You make the grass grow for the cattle  
and the plants to serve man's needs. **R.**

How many are your works, O Lord!  
In wisdom you have made them all.  
The earth is full of your riches.

Bless the Lord, my soul!

**R.**

**Let us pray.**

**O God, who wonderfully created human nature  
and still more wonderfully redeemed it,  
grant us, we pray,  
to set our minds against the enticements of sin,  
that we may merit to attain eternal joys.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

**Third Reading**

**Exodus 14:15-15:1**

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of God, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried. 'The Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!'

'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses, 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.'

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's

whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them.

That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

***I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!***

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!

Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea!  
The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.  
This is my God and I extol him,  
my father's God and I give him praise.

***I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!***

The Lord is a warrior! 'The Lord' is his name.

The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,  
the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.  
The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone.

***I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!***

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,  
your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.  
In the greatness of your glory you crushed the  
foe.

***I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!***

You will lead your people and plant them  
on your mountain,  
the place, O Lord, where you have made your  
home,  
the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.  
The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

***I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!***

***Let us pray***

O God, whose ancient wonders  
remain undimmed in splendour even in our day,  
for what you once bestowed on a single people,  
freeing them from Pharaoh's persecution

by the power of your right hand  
now you bring about as the salvation of the nations  
through the waters of rebirth,  
grant, we pray, that the whole world  
may become children of Abraham  
and inherit the dignity of Israel's birthright.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Seventh reading      Ezekiel 36:16-17,18-28 ·**

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows:  
'Son of man, the members of the House of Israel used to  
live in their own land, but they defiled it by their conduct  
and actions. I then discharged my fury at them because of  
the blood they shed in their land and the idols with which  
they defiled it. I scattered them among the nations and  
dispersed them in foreign countries. I sentenced them as  
their conduct and actions deserved. And now they have  
profaned my holy name among the nations where they  
have gone, so that people say of them, "These are the peo-  
ple of the Lord; they have been exiled from his land."

'But I have been concerned about my holy name, which  
the House of Israel has profaned among the nations where  
they have gone.

'And so, say to the House of Israel, "The Lord says this:  
I am not doing this for your sake, House of Israel, but for  
the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned  
among the nations where you have gone. I mean to dis-  
play the holiness of my great name, which has been pro-  
faned among the nations, which you have profaned among  
them. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord – it is  
the Lord who speaks – when I display my holiness for  
your sake before their eyes. Then I am going to take you  
from among the nations and gather you together from all  
the foreign countries, and bring you home to your own  
land.

"I shall pour clean water over you and you will be  
cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all  
your idols. I shall give you a new heart, and put a new  
spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your  
bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my  
spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely  
respect my observances. You will live in the land which I  
gave your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be  
your God."

**The word of the Lord.**

**Psalm      Psalm 41(42):2-3,5,42:3-**

**R. Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so  
my soul is yearning for you, my God.**

My soul is thirsting for God,  
the God of my life;  
when can I enter and see  
the face of God?      **R.**

These things will I remember  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd  
into the house of God,  
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,  
the throng wild with joy.      **R.**

O send forth your light and your truth;  
let these be my guide.  
Let them bring me to your holy mountain,  
to the place where you dwell.      **R.**

And I will come to the altar of God,  
the God of my joy.  
My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp,  
O God, my God.      **R.**

**Let us pray.**

O God of unchanging power and eternal light,  
look with favour on the  
wondrous mystery of the whole Church  
and serenely accomplish the work of human salvation,  
which you planned from all eternity;  
may the whole world know and see  
that what was cast down is raised up,  
what had become old is made new,  
and all things are restored  
to integrity through Christ,  
just as by him they came into being.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.**

**We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,**

have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

Let us pray.

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant  
with the glory of the Lord's Resurrection,  
stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption,  
so that, renewed in body and mind,  
we may render you undivided service.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**Epistle** **Romans 6:3-11**

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised  
in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we  
went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so  
that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's  
glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we  
shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise  
that our former selves have been crucified with him to  
destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of  
sin. When a Christian dies, of course, he has finished with  
sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall  
return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been  
raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no  
power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for  
all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way,  
you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but  
alive for God in Christ Jesus.

**The word of the Lord**

**Psalm** **Psalm 117(118):1-2,16-17,22-23**

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say:  
'His love has no end.'

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;  
his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds.

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.  
This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

**Gospel** **Mark 16:1-8**

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary  
the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with  
which to go and anoint him. And very early in the  
morning on the first day of the week they went to the  
tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll  
away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?'  
But when they looked they could see that the stone –  
which was very big – had already been rolled back. On  
entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white  
robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were  
struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is  
no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Naza-  
reth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here.  
See, here is the place where they laid him. But you  
must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going  
before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just  
as he told you."'

**The Gospel of the Lord**

*Blessing of Baptismal Water*

Dearly beloved,  
let us humbly invoke upon this font  
the grace of God the almighty Father,  
that those who from it are born anew  
may be numbered among the children of adoption in  
Christ.

O God, who by invisible power  
accomplish a wondrous effect  
through sacramental signs  
and who in many ways have prepared water,  
your creation,

to show forth the grace of Baptism;  
O God, whose Spirit  
in the first moments of the world's creation  
hovered over the waters,  
so that the very substance of water  
would even then take to itself the power to sanctify;  
O God, who by the outpouring of the flood  
foreshadowed regeneration,  
so that from the mystery  
of one and the same element of water  
would come an end to vice and a beginning of virtue;  
O God, who caused the children of Abraham  
to pass dry-shod through the Red Sea,  
so that the chosen people,  
set free from slavery to Pharaoh,  
would prefigure the people of the baptized;  
O God, whose Son,  
baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan,  
was anointed with the Holy Spirit,  
and, as he hung upon the Cross,  
gave forth water from his side along with blood,  
and after his Resurrection, commanded his disciples:  
"Go forth, teach all nations, baptizing them  
in the name of the Father and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit,"  
look now, we pray, upon the face of your Church  
and graciously unseal for her the fountain of Baptism.  
May this water receive by the Holy Spirit  
the grace of your Only Begotten Son,  
so that human nature, created in your image  
and washed clean through the Sacrament of Baptism  
from all the squalor of the life of old,  
may be found worthy to rise to the life  
of newborn children  
through water and the Holy Spirit.  
May the power of the Holy Spirit,  
O Lord, we pray,  
come down through your Son  
into the fullness of this font,  
so that all who have been buried with Christ  
by Baptism into death  
may rise again to life with him.  
Who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

*The people acclaim:*

**Springs of water, bless the Lord;  
praise and exalt him above all for ever.**

*After the blessing of baptismal water and the acclamation*

*of the people, the renewal of baptismal promises take place.*

### **The Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

*All stand, and the Priest addresses the faithful in these or similar words:*

Dear brethren (brothers and sisters),  
through the Paschal Mystery  
we have been buried with Christ in Baptism,  
so that we may walk with him in newness of life.  
And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded,  
let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism,  
by which we once renounced Satan and his works  
and promised to serve God  
in the holy Catholic Church.

And so I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan?

**I do.**

And all his works?

**I do.**

And all his empty show?

**I do.**

*Then the Priest continues:*

Do you believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth?

**I do.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered death and was buried,  
rose again from the dead  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**I do.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting?

**I do.**

And may almighty God,  
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us new birth  
by water and the Holy Spirit  
and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins,  
keep us by his grace,  
in Christ Jesus our Lord,  
for eternal life.

**Amen.**

I saw water flowing from the Temple,

from its right-hand side, alleluia;  
and all to whom this water came were saved  
and shall say: Alleluia, alleluia.

### **Prayer over the gifts**

Accept, we ask, O Lord,  
the prayers of your people  
with the sacrificial offerings,  
that what has begun in the paschal mysteries  
may, by the working of your power,  
bring us to the healing of eternity.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Sanctus**

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

### **Agnus Dei**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.

### **Communion Antiphon**      **1 Cor 5: 7-8**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed;  
therefore let us keep the feast  
with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia.

### **Prayer after Communion**

Pour out on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love,  
and in your kindness make those you have nourished  
by this paschal Sacrament  
one in mind and heart.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Easter Message from Fr Patrick**

Dearly beloved in Christ,

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad! The Easter festival is here again! It is the celebration of the victory of humanity over eternal death which had held the world hostage as a result of the disobedience of our first parents. At God's appointed time the hour of redemptive grace—the Son of the Eternal Father became for us the lamb slaughtered to take away the sin of the

world, bridging heaven and earth together as in a wedding feast: today, the Bride of Christ—the Church—rejoices with all God's children for the triumph of Christ over sin and death.

This is the second celebration of Easter since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. The world is still groaning under the pains and hardship inflicted on us by this invisible enemy. Lives have been lost; families have been thrown into mourning, confusion, pain, disappointment and misery due to the loss of dear ones, the pain of watching loved ones rendered breathless for a while or the sad experience of isolation or loss of means of livelihood. We are living in a world feeling so strange from what we used to have. Yet we rejoice with the words of the psalmist that 'God is for us a refuge and strength, a helper close at hand, in time of distress: so we shall not fear though the earth should rock, though the mountains fall into the depths of the sea, even though its waters rage and foam, even though the mountains be shaken by its waves. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold' (Ps. 46). It is the Lord who has been with us and is seeing us through the ups and downs of life. May his name be glorified forever. Amen.

As we share the joy of this Easter feast with one another, let us keep in mind that Christ must remain alive in us at all times. He must remain alive in us through prayer, acts of kindness, our work for justice, promotion of the dignity of the human person and the building up of our communities. And the best way to build up our communities is to be Christlike, making Christ known through a renewed call to Evangelization. We must always witness Christ to everyone by our way of life as this is our primary responsibility as brothers and sisters of Christ which we have become by the saving death and resurrection of our Lord.

Let me use this opportunity to thank all parishioners for holding on to the faith through this period of the pandemic, for sharing love with one another and for your prayers and participation in Church life albeit with the current restrictions. Special thanks to all parish stewards whose utmost dedication to serving has not only made it possible for Masses to be held but has enhanced our positive responses to the regulations guiding public worship at this time. I cannot but thank those who work behind the scenes to support our Lenten journey and make the Easter triduum as seamless as it was. Finally, I thank my brother priests, Fathers Celestine and Peter for their support, cooperation, dedication to work and exemplary priestly fraternity. On their behalf, I wish everyone a happy and blessed Easter!

Fr. Patrick Feyisetan